



CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE FOR REGENERATIVE MEDICINE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

March 1, 2005

CONTACT:

Fiona Hutton
Julie Buckner
Red Gate Communications
(818) 784-1222

Eminent Neuroscientist and Scientific Leader Named Interim President of the California Stem Cell Agency

Emeryville, CA – The Independent Citizens' Oversight Committee ("ICOC") today announced the appointment of Zach W. Hall, Ph.D as Interim President of the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine ("the Institute"). Hall, an internationally renowned neuroscientist and scientific administrator, has most recently been director of the Zilkha Neurogenetic Institute and senior associate dean at the Keck School of Medicine of the University of Southern California. In previous positions, he was executive vice chancellor at the University of California, San Francisco and director of the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke ("NINDS"), one of the National Institutes of Health.

The Institute was established in 2004 with the passage of Proposition 71, the California Stem Cell Research and Cures Initiative, and will be responsible for disbursing \$3 billion for stem cell research to California universities and research institutions over ten or more years. As Chief Executive Officer, the president will be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Institute, overseeing its scientific programs, recruiting and directing staff, organizing the processes of review and implementing the decisions of the ICOC with respect to grant awards, development of facilities, and compliance with ICOC scientific and medical standards.

"The Institute is very fortunate to have someone with Dr. Hall's extensive scientific background and proven leadership serving in the role of Interim President," said Robert Klein, Chairman of the Independent Citizens' Oversight Committee for the Institute. "Dr. Hall's dedication to furthering medical research, as well as his extensive expertise in the scientific field, make him an ideal candidate for this important leadership position."

Dr. Hall holds a distinguished resume, having served in numerous high-profile scientific positions. As vice chancellor at University of California, San Francisco from 1997 to 2001 he played a key role in developing the new 43-acre Mission Bay campus. From 1994-1997, Hall was director of NINDS, the nation's premier agency for funding neuroscience research.

- more -

“Zach has the ideal credentials to help lead the newly created California stem cell agency, including a vast and varied experience in basic research but also in successfully running major organizations and academic institutions,” said Fred H. Gage, Ph.D., Adler Professor, Laboratory of Genetics at the Salk Institute and former President of the Society of Neuroscience. “In these capacities, Zach has earned tremendous respect throughout the scientific community, exhibiting the highest levels of integrity.”

A basic neuroscientist, Hall has published more than 100 original and review articles. Hall is an elected member of the Institute of Medicine, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, honorary member of the American Neurological Society, and a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. He has served on advisory boards for the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, the Max-Planck Institutes in Germany and the RIKEN Brain Research Institute in Japan. In 2003 he received the Purkynje Medal for Scientific Achievement from the Czech Academy of Science.

Hall has also been active with a number of patient advocacy groups, including the Muscular Dystrophy Association, the National Neurofibromatosis Foundation, the Rett Syndrome Research Foundation, the Tuberous Sclerosis Alliance and the Roman Reed Research Project on Spinal Cord Injury.

“I am excited to be working on this historic project,” Dr. Hall said of the Institute. “To head a major new scientific initiative, that holds such promise for patients suffering from a wide range of devastating diseases, is indeed a rare opportunity. I look forward to the challenge.”

Dr. Hall, whose annual compensation will be \$389,004, has agreed to serve as Interim President and Senior Science Advisor for one year. As required by Proposition 71, Institute staff compensation is comparable with the University of California system and other research institutions, such as the Salk Institute, USC Medical School, and the City of Hope, represented on its governing board. The Presidential Search Subcommittee of the ICOC, the governing board of the Institute, has initiated a formal search to find a permanent President for the Institute.

The Institute was established in 2004 with the passage of Proposition 71, the California Stem Cell Research and Cures Initiative. The statewide ballot measure, which provided \$3 billion in funding for stem cell research at California universities and research institutions, was overwhelmingly approved by California voters, and called for the establishment of an entity to make grants and provide loans for stem cell research, research facilities and other vital research opportunities. More information on the Institute can be obtained at www.cirm.ca.gov.

###